

**BISHOPSTONE AND DISTRICT GROUP PARISH PLAN****Report By: Forward Planning Manager****Wards Affected**

Weobley

**Purpose**

To consider the Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan for adoption as interim supplementary planning guidance to the emerging Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan.

**Background**

The Government's White Paper 'Our Countryside, the future' (2000) proposed that all rural communities should develop 'Town, Village and Parish Plans' to identify key facilities and services, to set out the problems that need to be tackled and to demonstrate how distinctive character and features could be preserved. Parish Plans form one of the four initiatives of the Vital Village programme. They should address the needs of the entire community and everyone in the parish should have an opportunity to take part in its preparation. Local Planning Authorities are encouraged to adopt the planning components of Parish Plans as supplementary planning guidance.

**Adoption by Herefordshire Council**

Parish Plans will not have any statutory powers. They will however be a definitive statement about local character and issues. For a Parish Plan to be adopted as SPG, it must be consistent with planning policy and prepared in wide consultation with the community and interested parties. Only elements of Plans relevant to land use and development can be adopted as supplementary planning guidance.

Adoption will enable the Parish Council and local community to draw the attention of the Local Planning Authority and others to its context whenever it is pertinent to planning decisions within the village / parish. The Parish Plan will be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and be of assistance at their earlier compilation and pre-application stages.

Given the publication of the Revised Deposit Draft UDP, it is now more appropriate to consider, wherever possible, Parish Plans as SPG against the emerging UDP rather than existing local plans, where they are broadly consistent with the UDP policies and to adopt them as such. The adoption of Parish Plans as Supplementary Planning Guidance, albeit in interim form, will confirm their status in the Council's overall planning policy framework and is in line with Government and Countryside Agency guidance and UDP policy.

This parish plan is the sixth to be presented to Members for consideration as SPG.

## **Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan**

The Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan began in January 2003 and covers the parishes of Bishopstone, Bridge Sollers, Byford, Kenchester and Mansell Gamage. This parish plan was subject to a variety of well documented parish consultations which included 'Planning for Real®', summer fete, 5 public meetings, and a questionnaire delivered to each person on the electoral roll in the community, which achieved a 56% response rate. Overall a large cross section of residents participated in the plan process. Drafts of this Plan have been forwarded to the Council's key contacts in March of this year for comments to enable a final version which is now placed before Members.

The objectives of the Plan is to

- Highlight an holistic vision for the future of the combined parishes,
- Create a platform for the views of the community to be expressed, monitored and reported,
- Enable the community to liase with and influence other organisations, authorities and individuals involved in decision making which affect local issues.

The planning elements of the Plan can be found primarily on pages 8 to 10. The main issues being the provision of small low cost housing, the need for a community centre to meet recreational, educational, medical and environmental needs of the area.

The Parish Plan conforms with the emerging Unitary Development Plan and contains sufficient detail to be used as a material consideration in planning decisions and issues.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT It be recommended to the Cabinet Member (Environment) that the planning elements of the Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan be adopted as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance as an expression of local distinctiveness and community participation.**

### **Background paper**

Bishopstone and District Group Parish Plan